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Country programme recommendation**

The Comoros***

Addendum

Summary

The present addendum to the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2002 contains the final country programme recommendation for Board approval.

It contains a recommendation for funding the country programme of the Comoros, which has an annual planning level of $1,000,000 or less. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the amount of $3,399,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $1,500,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2003 to 2007.

* E/ICEF/2002/11.

** The original country note provided only indicative figures for estimated programme cooperation. The figures provided in the present addendum are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 2001. They will be contained in the summary of recommendations for regular resources and other resources programmes for 2002 (E/ICEF/2002/P/L.36).

*** Document submission was delayed pending receipt of final data.

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Basic data (2000 unless otherwise stated)	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	0.4
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	82
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	61
Underweight (% moderate and severe)	25
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) (1988)	520
Literacy (% male/female) (1999)	78/70
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (1999)	65/55
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1999)	48
Use of improved drinking water sources (%)	96
Systematic immunization funded by the Government (EPI) (%)	0
Incidence of HIV among adults	0.12[a]
GNP per capita (US$)	380
One-year-olds fully immunized against: (1999)	
Tuberculosis	89 per cent
Diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	77 per cent
Measles	61 per cent
Poliomyelitis	80 per cent
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus	41 per cent

[a] There was no available data to estimate the incidence of HIV as at 31 December 1999. Instead, the 1994 estimate of incidence published by the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Programme on AIDS has been applied to the adult population of the Comoros for 1999 in order to arrive at an estimate.

The situation of children and women

1. The present country programme recommendation for the period 2003 to 2007 is a continuation of the short-term programme for 2002, which was justified by the need to harmonize programming cycles with the other agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and by the socio-political situation characterized by the institutional and socio-political crisis.

2. The data on the situation of children and women provided in the country note has not changed. However, there has been a significant change in the political situation. Democratic institutions have been established, the Constitution of the Comoros and that of each island have been adopted and the President of the Comoros and those of the islands have been elected.

3. Although the institutional and political crisis is on its way to a solution, there is a great danger of social unrest, which would have a negative impact on the situation of children and women. The primary factors associated with this danger are inadequate preparation for the implementation of decentralization, an unclear definition of the prerogatives of the central Government and of the Government of each island, the lack of a policy for the redeployment of central government officials, the absence of an in-depth analysis of the various institutions' operations and some Comorians' intolerance of their compatriots from other islands.

Programme cooperation, 2002

4. The objective of the short-term country programme for 2002 was to provide continued support for the Government in its efforts to ensure enjoyment of the rights of children and women in the Comoros and, more specifically, to help: (a) develop policies and strategies in the areas of education, social welfare, health and emergency preparedness and response; (b) strengthen community development capacities; and (c) improve access to and quality of health and basic education services.

5. In the area of policy and strategy development, UNICEF played a major role in helping the Government begin preparations for the National Education Conference, at which the education and training master plan will be presented and the national Education for All plan will be developed in accordance with the April 2000 Dakar Framework for Action. UNICEF has also played a major role in providing the Ministry of Public Health with technical support in preparation for the National Education Conference, which is a necessary precondition for the ongoing development of a health policy, Horizon 2010, and of a three-year investment plan. UNICEF is also providing support to the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Affairs for the development of a policy for assistance to vulnerable persons.

6. In order to strengthen community development capacities, UNICEF has embarked on discussions with national partners regarding the preparation of an integrated early childhood development plan. Community capacities for data collection and analysis using the Education for All indicators are also being strengthened and the Ministry of Public Health has been helped to develop operational plans for 2002 at the district, regional and national levels. Community representatives and health development partners were involved in the development of these operational plans, which are preparing the health facilities for the effective decentralization of the health sector.

7. The most visible efforts to improve access to and quality of services are the establishment of assistance services for children and women in need; creation of educational quality monitoring mechanisms in the schools and communities; development of a strategy to promote girls' education; the preparation of supplemental immunization campaigns for the eradication of poliomyelitis and the elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus and measles; vitamin A supplementation for children under five; training of health workers in management of the expanded programme on immunization (EPI) and increase in religious leaders' awareness of efforts to combat AIDS.

Lessons learned from past cooperation

8. Although it is difficult to evaluate a one-year programme still in progress, some lessons can be learned. Even in a situation of extremely limited human resource capacities and motivation, remarkable results may be achieved through hands-on technical assistance and an improved work environment. Using these two approaches, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) have ensured that national officials at various levels rapidly produced operational plans at all levels of the health system, that high-quality project proposals were submitted to the Global

Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria and that the necessary technical documents for the National Education Conference were prepared; ownership of the education sector master plan development process and of the capacity for negotiation with partners were also achieved. In a tense socio-political climate where political factors sometimes make cooperation between the nation's various institutions difficult, the development partners can serve as facilitators between these national institutions, which tend to work within their own geographical areas and to ignore coordination at the national level.

9. The current political change, which gives greater autonomy to the islands, is an opportunity for programme ownership by nationals at various levels. This change is creating competition for access to resources, developing officials' negotiation capacities and improving programme implementation.

Recommended programme of cooperation, 2003-2007

	Estimated annual expenditure (In thousands of United States dollars)					
	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*Total*
General resources						
Health/nutrition	274	274	274	274	274	1 370
Education	200	200	200	200	200	1 000
Child protection and communication	90	90	90	90	90	450
Cross-sectoral costs	115	116	116	116	116	579
Subtotal	**679**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**680**	**3 399**
Other resources						
Health/nutrition	150	150	150	150	150	750
Education	100	100	100	100	100	500
Child protection and communication	50	50	50	50	50	250
Subtotal	**300**	**300**	**300**	**300**	**300**	**1 500**
Total	**979**	**980**	**980**	**980**	**980**	**4 899**

Country programme preparation process

10. This process is guided by the Planning Committee, which, at a structural level, operates under the Office of the President. The Chairman of the Planning Committee chaired the strategy meeting, in which the secretaries- and directors-general of the partner ministries, the focal points of the partner ministries, the technical services directors of all the islands, community representatives, the regional office representative, the regional office programme coordinator, representatives of United Nations agencies (including WHO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)), bilateral and

multilateral cooperation representatives and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated actively. This programme preparation process took place simultaneously with the preparation of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The two processes were mutually enriching in their content. Technical approval of this recommended programme of cooperation was given by the cooperation programme steering committee, which is made up of the directors- and secretaries-general of the partner ministries, the focal points of the partner ministries and the technical services representatives of the islands.

Goals and objectives of the country programme

11. The goal of the 2003-2007 cooperation programme is to strengthen capacities at the national, regional, district and family levels in order to ensure enjoyment of the rights of children and women in the Comoros. The programme's specific objectives are to help: (a) develop national policies and strategies in the areas of social welfare, health, education and emergency preparedness and response; (b) strengthen community-level ownership capacities and demand for high-quality services; (c) improve access to and quality of health and education services; (d) reduce the infant mortality rate from 61 to 46 per 1,000 live births; (e) reduce the infant and child mortality rate from 82 to 60 per 1,000 live births; (f) reduce the maternal mortality rate from 520 to 450 per 100,000 live births; and (g) maintain the incidence of HIV seropositivity at less than 1 per cent. These objectives are incorporated into UNDAF, of which the overall objective is to help reduce poverty through the training of vulnerable groups by (a) integrating them into the production system; (b) facilitating their access to high-quality social services and their effective use thereof; and (c) ensuring their participation in decision-making mechanisms.

Links with national and international priorities

12. The national priorities of Education for All, improvement in the quality of education, partnership with communities, efforts to combat endemics and epidemics such as malaria, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and survival of children and mothers are all reflected in this cooperation programme. Its development also reflects the priorities mentioned in the Declaration of the United Nations Special Session on Children and is guided by the priorities of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, particularly those relating to HIV/AIDS, integrated early childhood development (including girls' education), child protection and adolescent development. The cooperation programme will promote the progressive achievement of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, international development objectives and the Comoros' commitment to the 2001 Pan-African Forum on the Future of Children in Africa.

Programme strategy

13. Although the programme strategy remains essentially unchanged since the country note, the most important adaptation is that of results-based management in accordance with the priorities of the medium-term strategic plan, which focus on

excellence in programme and operations management. UNICEF resources and advocacy with the central Government, local governments and development partners will be used to expand the scope of innovative projects implemented by this programme, including Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (ICMI), basic education, early childhood development and efforts to combat HIV/AIDS.

14. The 2003-2007 cooperation programme includes three principal programmes: health and nutrition, education and child protection and communication.

15. The **health and nutrition programme** consists of three projects: survival of children and mothers; efforts to combat STDs and AIDS; and nutrition. The programme will promote the following national objectives: eradication of poliomyelitis, elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus, elimination of measles and vitamin A deficiency, achievement and maintenance of a 90 per cent coverage rate, introduction of new vaccines, development of micro-planning at the district level, support for the Government's development of an emergency preparedness and response plan, introduction and implementation of ICMI in all health centres at the community level in 50 per cent of health districts, and achievement of a 70 per cent rate of use of impregnated mosquito nets in districts implementing ICMI. The programme will seek to achieve the following results: a five-year plan and annual plans for each health district; 90 per cent immunization coverage for each health district; eradication of poliomyelitis; elimination of measles and tetanus; 70 per cent coverage for vitamin A distribution to children under five; availability of vaccines and vaccination materials; introduction of the hepatitis B vaccine into the vaccination schedule; development of a national strategy document on integrated early childhood development; establishment of at least one nutritional recovery centre in the hospitals and health centres of every island; provision of community-based nutrition education; preparation of a national health policy document and a three-year health sector investment plan; incorporation of HIV/STD/AIDS components into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP); preparation of a five-year health development plan for each island and district, including HIV/STD/AIDS components; and improvement in the quality of STD treatment.

16. The **education programme** consists of three projects: early childhood development, primary education and promotion of girls' education. The programme will promote the following national objectives: increase in the net enrolment rate from 60 per cent to 78 per cent; increase in the promotion rate from 55 per cent to 65 per cent; support for Government implementation of a preschool programme for children aged three to five; strengthened partnership between schools and communities; and reduction of the repetition and dropout rates from 25 per cent to 10 per cent and from 12 per cent to 5 per cent, respectively. The programme will seek to achieve the following results: increase in the rate of girls' access to education to 78 per cent; increase in the number of classrooms, the quantity of school equipment and the number of teachers; greater family involvement and local community awareness in the area of education; development of the national plan on Education for All; development and implementation of 100 school projects; construction of separate latrines for boys and girls and of water points in the schools; achievement of a 50 per cent student proficiency rate in reading, writing, arithmetic and social skills; achievement of a 70 per cent promotion rate and only a 10 per cent repetition rate for children of the required age; development and implementation of a national integrated early childhood development plan; and adoption of the new early learning programme by 50 Koranic schools.

17. **The child protection and communication programme** consists of two projects: child protection and communication in support of sectoral programmes. The programme will promote the following national objectives: support for the Government's development and implementation of its child protection policy and strategy; advocacy and social mobilization for children's and women's rights; achievement of the sectoral programme objectives through communications activities; support for the Government's efforts to combat child labour, the exploitation of children by their foster families and juvenile delinquency; and reduction of the percentage of children without birth certificates from 17 per cent to 5 per cent. The programme will seek to achieve the following results: media involvement in increasing public awareness of Education for All as a strategy for the prevention of child labour and exploitation; improved awareness of disparities by the authorities and local communities with a view to the development of a prevention and assistance strategy; effective assistance to at-risk children; an integrated approach to children's rights in the national early childhood development plan; provision of assistance to the authorities responsible for providing assistance to at-risk children; and harmonization of national legislation with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in order to ensure better protection of children and effective assistance to children in need.

18. **The cross-sectoral costs** will cover the costs of managing the country programme in support of the cooperation programme. The general resources will be used essentially to launch innovative programmes and to support critical action relating to UNICEF's mandate which is not covered by the Government or the other partners. The other resources will be used to develop and expand the successful projects supported by the cooperation programme.

Monitoring and evaluation

19. Monitoring and review mechanisms for the cooperation programme will be implemented through monthly field visits and through the quarterly and annual reviews conducted with the partners. A mid-term review will be conducted simultaneously with the mid-term review of UNDAF in 2005. An integrated country programme monitoring and evaluation plan has been developed as part of the country programme management plan. UNICEF will help provide technical and financial support for implementation of the general population and housing survey, the demographic and health study, the multiple-indicator cluster study and other specific studies which will be carried out in order to expand and improve evaluation and analysis of the situation of children and women. Particular attention will be paid to monitoring and evaluation activities undertaken at the community level and to UNDAF.

Cooperation with other partners

20. Partnership development will seek to strengthen alliances with key partners who help to achieve the programme's objectives. This partnership will be expanded through, inter alia, UNDAF (UNDP, WHO and UNFPA); thematic or working groups on combating AIDS (Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS)) and combating malaria; the sectoral health committee; the inter-agency EPI support committee, specifically in connection with GAVI, and projects on girls' education

and monitoring of the quality of education. Partnership with international and local NGOs, local associations and public and private institutions will also be expanded. Close cooperation with the European Union, principal donor to the Comoros in the education sector, will be further strengthened. The Office's resource mobilization strategy describes in detail how partnership with the partners will be expanded in order to mobilize all anticipated resources. In particular, the UNICEF Office will provide technical support to the Comorian Government so that it can gain access to global funds such as GAVI, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and similar global and regional initiatives. UNICEF support for the Government will also ensure good planning and sound financial management of the monies allocated by these global funds.

Programme management

21. Ongoing guidance of the cooperation programme will be provided by the Planning Committee or by the institution established to coordinate the partners' action in connection with the Comoros; this steering committee's composition will be representative at the level of each island. The steering committee will be responsible for guiding the cooperation programme during critical periods such as the analysis of the situation of children and women, the allocation of resources for each island, the annual reviews, the mid-term review, strategy meetings and preparation of the future cooperation programme.

22. In light of the new arrangement on the autonomy of the islands, annual action plans for each programme will be prepared for each island. The requests will be submitted directly to the UNICEF Office by the relevant technical service directors for each island.

TABLE
LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

COUNTRY : COMOROS
PROGRAMME:2003-2007

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET			POSTS a/										STAFF COSTS b/		
	RR	OR	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
REGULAR RESOURCES :																
HEALTH AND NUTRITION	1,370,000		1,370,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	177,233	177,233
EDUCATION	1,000,000		1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	110,951	110,951
CHILD PROTECTION/COMMUNICATION	450,000		450,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CROSS-SECTORAL COSTS	579,000		579,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	210,592	210,592
TOTAL RR	3,399,000		3,399,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	7	0	498,776	498,776
OTHER RESOURCES :																
HEALTH AND NUTRITION		750,000	750,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EDUCATION		500,000	500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHILD PROTECTION/COMMUNICATION		250,000	250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OR		1,500,000	1,500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RR & OR	3,399,000	1,500,000	4,899,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	7	0	498,776	498,776
SUPPORT BUDGET	Operating costs		767,749													
	Staffing			0	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	4	7	1,743,546	409,052	2,152,598
GRAND TOTAL (RR + OR + SB)				0	0	0	1	0	1	2	3	9	14	1,743,546	907,828	2,651,374
Number of posts and staff costs:																
Current programme cycle										2	3	9	14			
At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)										2	3	9	14	1,743,546	907,828	2,651,374

RR = regular resources.
OR = other resources.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional.
GS = General Service.
SB = support budget.

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole.
b/ Excludes temporary assistance and overtime.